

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method of managing a computer information database that contains computer profile data for computers, the method including the steps of:

A. determining a multiple node tree structure of groups for the computers based on primary grouping criteria and secondary grouping criteria;

B. including, in a database mapping table, fields for the primary grouping criteria and the secondary grouping criteria, and including in those fields, in respective table records, values corresponding to computer profile data of interest that are utilized in the primary grouping and the secondary grouping criteria, the table further including, in the respective records, information that identifies the groups to which the computers that satisfy the primary and secondary criteria are assigned;

C. receiving, for inclusion in the database, computer profile data from a plurality of computers;

D. for the profile data from a given computer

extracting data that corresponds to the profile data of interest for the primary groupings and the secondary groupings,

querying the table to determine if the extracted data correspond to the values that are included in the primary grouping and secondary grouping fields in any of the records in the table, and

if the query results in no records, assigning the computer to a default group,

if the query results in one table record, assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record,

if the query results in multiple table records that include secondary low values, assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record that is in a predetermined position in the order in which the records are returned, -or

if the query results in multiple records and there are no corresponding secondary low values in the records, assigning the computer to the group that is

named in the record that is in a predetermined position in the order in which the records are returned; and

E. manipulating the data from the database to produce reports that summarize the attributes of the computers in the groups, with each report for a given group including therein the attributes of the computers in the groups that are on a sub-tree with the given group as its root.

2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein one or more table records includes secondary grouping values set to NULL.
3. (previously amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the values associated with the primary grouping criteria are ranges and the step of determining if the extracted data correspond to the values further includes determining if the corresponding extracted data of interest falls within one of the primary grouping ranges.
4. (previously amended) The method of claim 3 wherein the values associated with the secondary grouping criteria are ranges and the step of determining if the extracted data correspond to the values further includes determining if the corresponding extracted data of interest falls within one of the secondary grouping ranges.
5. (previously amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of querying further includes determining if the extracted data corresponds to the primary grouping criteria and a secondary low value of NULL or the empty string .
6. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the primary and secondary grouping criteria are user-specified.
7. (currently amended) A method of managing a computer information database that contains computer profile data for computers, the method including the steps of:

A. determining a multiple node tree structure of groups for the computers based on primary grouping criteria;

B. including, in a database mapping table, fields for the primary grouping criteria that correspond to a range of values ~~of the~~ for computer profile data of interest that are utilized ~~as in the primary grouping criteria used~~ to assign the computers to groups for profile data reporting, and including in those fields, in respective table records, high and low values for the computer profile data of interest, the table further including, in the records, information that identifies the groups to which the computers that satisfy the primary grouping criteria are assigned;

C. receiving, for inclusion in the database, computer profile data from a plurality of computers;

D. for the profile data from a given computer

extracting data that correspond to the primary grouping profile data of interest,

querying the table to determine if the extracted data fall within the ranges of values that are included in the primary grouping fields in any of the table records, and

if the query results in no records, assigning the computer to a default group,

if the query results in one table record, assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record, or

if the query results in multiple table records assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record that is in a predetermined position in the order in which the records are returned; and

E. manipulating the data from the data base to produce reports that summarize the attributes of the computers in the groups, with the report for a given group including therein the attributes of the computers in the groups that are on a sub-tree with the given group as its root.

8. (currently amended) The method of claim 7 further including the steps of

including, in the table, fields that correspond to a range of values for computer profile data of interest that are utilized as ~~in~~ secondary grouping criteria ~~used to~~ assign the computers to groups for profile data reporting, and including in the fields in respective table records high and low values for the secondary grouping computer profile data of interest, and

for the profile data from a given computer

further extracting data that correspond to the secondary grouping profile data of interest,

further querying the table to determine if the further extracted data fall within the secondary grouping criteria ranges included in the table records, and

if the query results in one table record, assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record,

if the query results in multiple table records that include secondary low values, assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record that is in a predetermined position in the order in which the records are returned,

if the query results in no records, assigning the computer to a default group, or

if the query results in multiple records and there are no corresponding secondary low values in the records, assigning the computer to the group that is named in the record that is in a predetermined position in the order in which the records are returned.

9. (previously amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the step of querying further includes determining if the extracted data corresponds to the primary grouping criteria and a secondary low value of NULL or the empty string.

10. (previously added) The method of claim 1 wherein the predetermined position in the order of the records with secondary low values is the first record found and the predetermined position in the order of records with no secondary low values is the last record found.

11. (previously added) The method of claim 8 wherein the predetermined position in the order of the records with secondary low values is the first record found and the predetermined position in the order of records with no secondary low values is the last record found.

12. (previously added) A method for managing a database that contains computer profile data for a plurality of computers, the method including the steps of

grouping the plurality of computers in groups that are nodes of a multiple node tree in accordance with user-specified primary grouping criteria and secondary grouping criteria that are values of computer profile data of interest;

manipulating the database data to produce summaries of attributes of the computers in a given group and in the groups in the subtree that has the given group as its root.

13. (previously added) The method of claim 12 wherein the step of grouping further includes re-grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with different user-specified primary and secondary grouping criteria.

14. (previously added) The method of claim 12 wherein the step of grouping further includes grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with primary and secondary grouping criteria that correspond to selected physical locations of users.

15. (previously added) The method of claim 14 wherein the further step of grouping includes re-grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with primary and secondary grouping criteria that correspond to selected structures within the underlying organization of users.

16. (previously added) The method of claim 12 wherein the step of grouping further includes grouping computers in accordance with user-specified primary and secondary criteria that utilize ranges of values for computer profile data of interest.

17. (previously added) The method of claim 16 wherein the step of grouping further includes re-grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with different user-specified ranges of values.

18. (previously added) The method of claim 16 wherein the respective ranges of values correspond to a selected structure within the underlying organization of users.

19. (previously added) The method of claim 18 wherein the further step of grouping includes re-grouping the plurality of computers in groups in accordance with primary and secondary grouping criteria that correspond to other selected structures within the underlying organization of users.